

## Mayor's Update



### Firefighters Contract

I'm happy to share that the City and the Newton Firefighters Local 863 have a new three-year contract which the membership unanimously ratified this morning.

The agreement, which runs through June 2023, is great for our firefighters and great for our City.

“On behalf of the Newton Firefighters, I want to thank Mayor Fuller and her negotiating team for reaching a fair contract and for continuing to show us her respect,” Union President Firefighter Marc Rizza said.

In addition, the Newton Teachers Association as well as the Newton Custodians Association and the School Committee ratified the new teachers' and the new custodians' contract and the Teamsters Local 25 ratified theirs on Dec. 3.

### Disposal Fees for Big, Bulky Items

Waste disposal and recycling costs are skyrocketing in Massachusetts so we have been looking closely at Newton's services.

With a new ordinance passed by the City Council

on Monday night, trash and recycling that fits in a cart will continue to be a city service paid for by our property taxes. Televisions, monitors and large metal items that are recyclable (e.g., refrigerators, washing machines) will continue to be picked up at the curb for a fee but the fee structure is changing. In six weeks, we will start charging a fee to pick up large items like couches, mattresses and wooden chairs/tables, known as “bulky items.”

More specifically, starting on Saturday, Feb. 1, we will now have to pay \$20 per item for the curbside collection of “bulkies.” These oversized items include anything that is too big for a trash cart and cannot feasibly be recycled. Examples include mattresses, wood furniture, rugs, chairs and tables. The new fees will help cover the cost of the service.

Until February 1, a [bulky waste item pickup](#) can continue to be requested at no cost using the 311 system, using the Recycle Right Newton app, or by calling Newton Customer Service, but there is a limit of 5 bulky items per household per week.

**Bulky Waste Collection**

- 30% Mattresses & Box Springs
- 15% Upholstered Furniture
- 15% Carpet & Rugs
- 20% Wooden Furniture
- 5% Scrap Wood
- 15% Other: sink/toilet, office chair, large dog bed, suitcase, air hockey table, etc.

After February 1, residents can make a bulky item request and pay by credit card through the online bill pay service ([www.newtonma.gov/billpay](http://www.newtonma.gov/billpay)). Alternatively, residents can make the request and pay by check or credit card at Customer Service in Newton City Hall. There will be no limit on the number of bulky items per household per week.

Bulky items that are recyclable are known as “white goods” (e.g., a washer or dryer, any large scrap metal item, a refrigerator) and we will continue to charge a fee for curbside pickup but with a different fee structure.



Starting on February 1, white goods pickups will have a \$25 fee per item (an increase of \$5 from the current \$20 fee) These requests will continue to be made and paid for through the online bill pay service at our website ([www.newtonma.gov/billpay](http://www.newtonma.gov/billpay)). Alternatively, residents can make the request and pay by check or credit card at Customer Service in Newton City Hall.

The fee for each white goods curbside pickup covers the cost of transportation from the curb to the Resource Recovery Center located at 115 Rumford Avenue. Please know that residents can continue to bring these items (appliances, scrap metal, etc.) to the Resource Recovery Center themselves for drop-off at no charge.

Another category of large items is televisions and computer monitors. TV and computer monitor recycling will continue to have a fee but the fee structure is changing. The cost will be \$25 per item whether it is picked up at the curb or if we drop it off ourselves at the Resource Recovery Center on Rumford Avenue; these are the only items that require proof of payment of the \$25 fee to drop off at Rumford. Again, use the online service or come to City Hall to pay.

Don't forget that overflow trash around the holidays can be set out at the curb in orange overflow bags. Orange overflow bags are available at [many Newton retailers](#).

Please consider signing up for the curbside composting service. More information can be found [here](#).

I know it hurts our wallets to start paying a fee for bulky item pickup and the change in the fee structure for the white goods, televisions and computer monitors may make it more costly for us. It helps a bit to know that our fees remain much lower than those charged by private haulers. Even with these revenues, the cost to the City of Newton to continue our trash and recycling services will go up by approximately \$1.1 million next year, an increase of 17.5%. Believe it or not, this is a less steep increase than some other communities are facing. The recent contract negotiation in the Town of Milton, for example, yielded a [32% year-over-year increase](#).

### **Building Green in Newton**

Two new “building energy efficiency” ordinances will help make Newton greener. The City Council passed the new ordinances on Monday.

One ordinance allows homeowners and small property owners to be exempt from

specified zoning rules to increase the energy efficiency and sustainability of their homes and businesses. For example, a small vestibule can now be built on the front entrance of a house without the usual amount of setback between the home and the property line that zoning usually requires if it increases energy efficiency. Another example involves solar panels which can now be added to the roof of a home even if the panels slightly exceed the usual maximum height requirement.

Another ordinance requires developers of large projects in Newton (20,000-square-foot and above) to commit to a higher level of sustainability. Their buildings will have to be certifiable through a green rating system such as LEED, Passive House or Enterprise Green Communities. Certification includes requirements ranging from electric appliances, energy efficient heating and cooling systems to water saving measures and solar.

### **New City Council Leadership**

Ward 2 City Councilor at Large Susan Albright is the President-elect of the City Council, and Rick Lipof, the Ward 8 Councilor at Large, will serve as Vice President.



The incoming City Councilors caucused last Thursday to choose the new leadership team for the two-year term that begins on Jan. 1.

Join me at noon on Wednesday, Jan. 1, in the Council Chambers on the second floor of City Hall, 1000 Commonwealth Ave., at the inauguration ceremony for the City Council and School Committee members.

### **Ring in the New Year with Automatic Book Renewals**

Do you have “read more books” as a New Year’s resolution? The Newton Free Library has just made it a little more convenient. Starting January 1, your library checkouts will renew themselves.

The Newton Free Library and the forty other Minuteman Library Network members will turn on automatic renewals beginning in 2020. We’ll no longer have to manually renew books, videos or other library items; the system will automatically renew most items two days before it would be due, and send an email with the new due date.

The email will also note any items that could not be renewed and reconfirm the original due date. Items that would not be renewed would include items on hold for another person, items that had already been renewed the maximum number of times for that type of item, or items that do not allow for renewals.

Want more information about these new features? Click [here](#) or follow Minuteman Library Network on Facebook and/or Twitter.

### **Ascend Withdraws Application for Marijuana Dispensary (for now)**

Ascend Mass withdrew its application to open an adult-use marijuana dispensary at the corner of 58 Cross Street and 1089 Washington Street just east of West Newton Square after a City Council Land Use Committee meeting a few weeks ago.

Neighbors of the proposed dispensary voiced concerns about the proposed site plan and traffic in and out of the parking lot.

Ascend is expected to refile its application. If they do, the City Council approval process and the public hearings will start anew.

## December 31<sup>st</sup> Open House

End the year by having a great time helping our community. Stop by City Hall on Tuesday, Dec. 31 from 10:00 a.m. to noon for the 2019 Mayor's New Year's Eve Open House and Food Drive at City Hall, 1000 Commonwealth Ave.

Come right at 10:00 a.m. and meet in the War Memorial to sort the food donated to help Newton's four food pantries. Consider bringing a breakfast item with you. The food pantries are asking in particular for cereal, granola, oatmeal, energy and granola bars, non-perishable milk boxes, coffee, tea, and peanut butter.

Starting at 10:30, stop by my office on the second floor and other rooms along the hall for fun activities for children. You can also help volunteers prepare care packages for active-duty soldiers serving overseas.

## Thank You!

Each year I recognize and thank two employees for exemplary work.

This year's Innovator of the Year is Sustainability Materials Manager Waneta Trabert. Waneta is ably leading us through the changing world of recycling and waste disposal. She is smart, tough, persistent and hardworking. She sees the forest and helps us plant the trees.



Our Employee of the Year is Chief Environmental Engineer Jennifer Steel. Jennifer served internally as the lead strategist and author of Newton's Climate Action Plan and played a critical role in preserving Webster Woods. Jennifer turns her deep passion for our environment into action here in Newton in an unflappable, caring, and uber effective manner.

The work these women have done is making a permanent difference for our City and we are so, so fortunate to have them both here in Newton.

Happy, happy holidays,

Ruthanne

P.S. Looking for a place to walk your dog this winter? The Newton Commonwealth Golf Course, 212 Kenrick St., is a wonderful park in the winter



# Competitive Electric Supply

Tuesday,  
January 7,  
2020  
7:00 pm

Druker Auditorium



Join us for a panel presentation where you will learn about Newton's Power Choice program, tips to make sure you are getting a fair deal on your electric bills and how to spot misleading prices and deceptive sales tactics from competitive electric suppliers.

The panelists will be:

- Tim Dapin, Deputy Director of the Community Engagement Division
- Ann Borvick, Co-Director of Sustainability, City of Newton
- Paul Gromer, Newton Power Choice consultant

Cosponsored by the Attorney General's Office and Green Newton.



330 Homer Street  
617.796.1360  
newtonfreelibrary.net

that's open to the public through March and is dog friendly. You might just run into me and my husband Joe walking our pointer, Argus.

P.P.S. Come sing with us! Do you love to sing? Join the MLK Day 2020 Community Chorus and raise your voice together with neighbors at the City's Martin Luther King Day Celebration on Monday, Jan. 20. Any and all are welcome. Please commit to attend at least one Sunday practice on January 5 and/or January 12, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at Temple Shalom, 175 Temple Street, West Newton. Singing well is *not* a requirement! Participants need to RSVP by clicking [here](#). Questions? Click [here](#).

P.P.P.S Are you confused about your electric bill? Learn tips for spotting misleading pricing and deceptive sales tactics, and get more information about Newton Power Choice, the City's vetted green energy program at a panel discussion on Tuesday, Jan. 7. The program begins at 7:00 p.m. at the Newton Free Library, 330 Homer Street, and is co-sponsored by Attorney General Maura Healey's Office and Green Newton.

